PCC Purpose and Impact

Platform Cooperativism Consortium

INSTITUTE FOR THE COOPERATIVE DIGITAL ECONOMY

THE NEW SCHOOL

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1. Editorial

“When someone hires me or another cleaner, they get to work with the boss herself.”

— **Maria Carmen Tapia**, Up & Go Cooperative

That’s what it sounds like when you have control—and keep more of what you earn. Not many people in this line of work can say that.

As digital tools tighten control over work and life, it’s getting harder to imagine real change. Policymakers talk about innovation and inclusion, but those promises rarely reach the app driver idling outside an office building or the courier scanning apartment buzzers in the rain. Reform tends to stay abstract—about platforms and productivity—while the people doing the work face lower pay, unstable hours, and nonstop surveillance.

An often unasked question is this: **how do we stop recycling broken fixes and start building something that meets the needs of all of us—especially those staring down eviction notices, missed shifts, and empty bank accounts—right now, not someday?**

This report offers one possible answer. It shows what becomes possible when research connects with community organizing, education, and political struggle.

It documents the work by the **Platform Cooperativism Consortium (PCC)** and the **Institute for the Cooperative Digital Economy (ICDE)** at **The New School**—two institutions advancing democratic, scalable models of digital solidarity.

What follows isn't just a list of what we've done. It's a demonstration that research, organizing, and education—when aligned—can carve out real alternatives within systems that often feel unmovable. These efforts don't fix everything, but they create space—space to breathe, to earn, to be heard.

Digital platforms were once seen as tools for access and flexibility—a way for more people to be heard and contribute on their own terms. For a moment, they delivered: lowering barriers to entry, and bypassing gatekeepers. What started as an open space is now captured by a handful of powerful companies. Much like the enclosure of common lands in early modern England, digital space that once seemed open and participatory has been cordoned off—claimed by private firms, regulated by opaque code rather than hedgerows. These firms control everything from shopping and transportation to search and delivery, turning digital platforms into services that feel like public utilities but face almost no oversight. **According to the World Bank, more than 45 million people now work through digital platforms worldwide**. The platform model, once confined to the gig economy, is now reshaping sectors far beyond its original domain; jobs in hospitality, care work, and other customer-facing roles are increasingly orchestrated through apps and digital systems.

And that promise of open access hasn't held. Power, data, and profit have become more concentrated—not less. AI now shapes who gets work, how much they're paid, and how they're treated, often deepening unfairness. Many are labeled "independent contractors," but in practice, they're managed like employees—just without the rights or protections. Algorithms set the terms, monitor performance in real time, and issue penalties without explanation—and with no option for recourse.

Things did not have to go this way. It reflects deliberate choices—regulatory, technological, and economic—that prioritized scale over equity, growth over democratic participation. Other paths were possible. And in some corners, people are still working to carve them out.

Platform cooperatives and **adjacent solidarity enterprises** offer a different reality: **one grounded in shared ownership, democratic governance, and fair labor standards**. In the spirit of Erik Olin Wright's real utopias framework, these efforts don't wait for perfect conditions—they experiment with what's possible now, aiming to chip away at dominant structures by building viable, emancipatory alternatives. They offer not solely critique but construction—working prototypes of a more democratic economy.

Consider the testimony of **Daniel Cahill**, Equal Care Cooperative (UK):

“Members of a co-op get sick less often, and when they do get sick, they are more likely to get treatment and they seek treatment earlier than people who aren’t in co-ops.”

It’s a reminder that cooperative models don’t simply change workflows—they shift outcomes. **Together, PCC and ICDE have helped improve conditions for over one million workers and engaged tens of millions more through campaigns, courses, and research**. They’ve supported the launch of over **640 digital cooperative projects** across **53 countries**, contributed to policy shifts in **seven nations**, and anchored a movement that now spans at least **two million people worldwide**. Along the way, they’ve sparked wide-ranging conversations about the digital economy, bringing cooperative ideas into policy circles, academic debates, and the cooperative movement itself.

In academia, this work has taken root with the emergence of digital solidarity economy studies as a recognized subfield, supported by **58 ICDE research fellows**—mostly Ph.D. students—since 2019, alongside **90+ scholars** actively shaping its development. ICDE stands out in its clear commitment to worker collectives—while also challenging academic discourse. These are not isolated wins, but part of a broader push to remake the digital economy from the ground up.

Platform cooperatives are not a cure-all. We reject the kind of solutionism—especially its technological strain—that imagines any one model can fix a system this complex. But they are a vital part of a broader ecosystem of resistance and reconstruction: from union organizing to legislative reform, from employee ownership to municipalist initiatives and public–cooperative hybrids.

This is not just our work—it's a collective project, linked to movements for tech accountability, climate justice, racial and economic equity, and democratic governance. What we imagine, teach, and build next won't depend on any one institution, but on the alliances we build—and the infrastructures we choose to create together. It's the kind of future Maria Carmen Tapia gestures toward—not hypothetical, not perfect, but real, and already under way.

2. Our Principles and Values

The alternatives outlined in this report—from worker-led tech platforms to community-owned infrastructures—aren't improvised responses. They are rooted in a long-standing tradition of cooperative values: shared ownership, democratic control, and a commitment to equity. At the Platform Cooperativism Consortium (PCC), these values form the foundation of our approach to reshaping the digital economy.

We draw inspiration from the **Rochdale Equitable Pioneers—a group of 28 weavers and artisans in 1844 England—whose principles became the ethical and organizational backbone of cooperatives around the world**. Far from static, these principles were re-articulated in 1995 through a global process led by the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), co-designed with input from hundreds of cooperatives worldwide. Today, they continue to evolve in response to new challenges.

As we confront the realities of artificial intelligence, platform monopolies, and opaque data systems, these principles offer more than historical continuity—they are the framework guiding our work in the digital present. They reflect a practical commitment to building systems where workers come first, labor is valued over capital, and economic decisions serve collective needs.

What follows are the **seven cooperative principles** and accompanying values that shape our vision for a more just and democratic digital economy.

1 **Voluntary and Open Membership** means that cooperatives are open to all who are willing to participate and take on the responsibilities of membership—regardless of gender, race, belief, or social status. In the digital economy, this principle serves as a guardrail against exclusion and gatekeeping, ensuring that participation remains a choice, not a privilege. Equal Care Co-op illustrates this well: as a worker-led alternative to platform capitalism, it adopts a multi-stakeholder model—bringing caregivers and care recipients into shared ownership, and replacing algorithmic control with mutual accountability and collective decision-making. The result isn't just structural inclusion—it's trust built through participation.

2 **Democratic Member Control** means cooperatives are governed by their members, each with an equal voice. In contrast to platforms controlled by a few, this model distributes power across the people directly affected. But as platform cooperatives grow, maintaining real participation becomes harder. Voting alone isn't enough—systems must support ongoing engagement. CoopCycle, a federation of worker-owned delivery cooperatives sharing a common platform, shows how this can work. Unlike many co-ops—or most businesses—workers don't just use the software; they shape it, collaborating across local co-ops to set development priorities and federation rules. Stocksy, an artist-owned photography platform, takes a different but equally deliberate approach: recognizing the tensions of global membership, it built a proposal and dispute resolution system designed to resolve conflicts within 24 hours. Both cases suggest that democracy at scale isn't seamless—but it becomes possible when participation is treated as a design challenge, not just a principle.

3 **Member Economic Participation** ensures that members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. Surpluses aren't extracted—they're redistributed: reinvested in the organization, returned to members in proportion to their use, or directed toward shared goals agreed upon

collectively. The capital belongs to the community, not external shareholders. Up & Go, a cooperative providing professional home services, puts this into practice through a subscription-based model where worker-owners collectively fund operations, receive 95% of service fees, and share any surpluses based on their economic participation (e.g., hours worked or wages earned).

4 **Autonomy and Independence** underscores the importance of cooperatives maintaining self-governance, *free from controlling external interest*. This autonomy allows cooperatives to prioritize their members' needs and uphold democratic decision-making processes. When engaging with external entities, such as governments or investors, cooperatives must ensu re that these relationships do not compromise their democratic control or cooperative autonomy.

5 **Education, Training, and Information** underscores the importance of equipping members, leaders, and managers with the knowledge and skills to participate meaningfully in cooperative governance. This principle drives cooperatives to invest in training, support lifelong learning, and engage communities in critical discussions—fostering informed participation and long-term resilience.

Platform cooperatives build on this by treating education not as a cost, but as an essential part of democratic infrastructure. Members aren't just workers—they're co-owners, with a stake in decision-making. The Drivers Cooperative in New York City exemplifies this through its Drivers Academy, where drivers taught each other the tools of the trade—sharing practical knowledge about navigating the platform and understanding how the cooperative model works.

6 **Cooperation Among Cooperatives** calls on co-ops to work together—locally, nationally, and globally—to build resilient networks and shared capacity. It's a principle often neglected by traditional cooperatives, many of which operate in isolation or even rely on exploitative global supply chains. But platform cooperatives, by design, have the opportunity to do things differently. In the digital

economy, this sixth principle becomes a call to build interoperable systems, share digital infrastructure, and coordinate standards—especially around data governance and tech development. Cooperation among platform co-ops isn't just solidarity; it's a methodology. CoTech, a UK network of 30+ tech co-ops including Outlandish, embodies Principle Six by co-developing tools, sharing infrastructure, and jointly bidding on contracts—building an inter-cooperative economy at scale. By aligning across sectors, they have the potential to amplify collective power, lower costs, and center member well-being over market competition.

7 **Concern for Community** emphasizes cooperatives' commitment to improving the broader society, extending their efforts beyond their own members. Guided by values like self-help and social responsibility, cooperatives endeavor for economic, social, and environmental sustainability at both local and global levels. They respond to crises, fill gaps where public services fall short, and support causes such as peace, social justice, and environmental care. For instance, Señoritas Courier in São Paulo—a cooperative of women and trans cyclists—provides safe, dignified delivery work while promoting gender equity and digital inclusion. Señoritas prioritize sustainability by utilizing zero-emission transport methods, such as bicycles and electric vehicles, to reduce their environmental impact.

This principle encourages cooperatives to step outside their own movement, to be self-critical and reflective, and to collaborate with broader movements, amplifying their impact and fostering innovation. In that sense, it also responds to early critiques from revolutionaries like Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Marx, who argued that cooperatives risk becoming insular instruments of self-interest unless they operate in solidarity with broader movements for systemic change.

3. New Forms of Solidarity

The cooperative principles that once guided 19th-century weavers are now shaping the digital infrastructure of the 21st century—shaped in large measure by the early contributions of Professor Trebor Scholz, founding director of the Platform Cooperativism Consortium (PCC). In 2014, Scholz introduced the concept of *platform cooperatives*—digital platforms owned and governed by the people who rely on them. It was a direct challenge to the dominance of extractive tech and a call to redesign the digital economy around democratic ownership.

That same year, Scholz published a foundational essay that sparked global engagement, followed by a paper that laid out the core principles of platform cooperativism—translating long-standing cooperative values into guidelines for digital systems. Together, these texts laid the groundwork for a counter-narrative—one that reimagines the digital economy as a space for democratic ownership and worker agency, where grassroots digital platforms challenge the dominance of extractive systems and rebuild infrastructure from below.

His later books, **Own This!** (2023), *Ours to Hack and to Own* (2017, co-edited), and *Uberworked and Underpaid* (2016) expanded the case for digital solidarity. The argument remains clear: **the principles born in Rochdale can still guide us—but they must now contend with platform monopolies, legislation, mindsets, and venture capital**. This is not a theoretical exercise. It's a political project to return to the radical roots of cooperativism—where economic

democracy was inseparable from social struggle—and to link platform cooperatives with movements for labor rights, racial and gender justice, climate action, and digital sovereignty.

Through hundreds of talks worldwide—including a **TED Talk** with nearly **1.9 million views**—Scholz has helped mobilize technologists, activists, scholars, and policymakers around a shared vision for cooperative digital infrastructure. That vision has since taken root in a growing movement which has improved conditions for over one million workers.

4. What are Platform Cooperatives and Adjacent Solidarity Enterprises?

Platform cooperatives are cooperatively owned and democratically governed businesses that primarily operate through digital infrastructure—spanning apps, mobile-optimized websites, marketplaces, data cooperatives, on-chain collectives, and democratically governed Decentralized Autonomous Organizations (DAOs)—where ownership and governance rest with the people who rely on them.

Yet platform cooperatives do not exist in a vacuum. In many regions, legal frameworks actively constrain cooperative formation. In countries like Brazil, India, Indonesia, and Kenya, strict regulations have made traditional worker or multistakeholder co-ops difficult to establish. In response, **adjacent solidarity enterprises** have emerged: community-rooted businesses that adopt cooperative values through legally flexible structures such as member-managed Limited Liability Companies (LLCs) and worker-controlled machine learning systems. These aren't compromises—they're tactical adaptations, shaped by local constraints and grounded in long-term solidarity. What matters is not the form, but the function: structures that deliver tangible benefits to people, not the elevation of any particular legal model for its own sake.

Together, platform cooperatives and adjacent solidarity enterprises form a growing field of digital economic experimentation. They are *not a single model*, but a constantly evolving set of approaches—a field of ongoing experimentation and collective problem-solving. Together, they offer a shared response to labor exploitation, data abuse, unrestrained workplace surveillance, and algorithmic control—and a clear refusal of all forms of solutionism, especially the kind that treats technology as a neutral or sufficient fix for systemic injustice.

They aim not only to improve worker welfare, but to help build a more just, participatory digital economy—one increasingly recognized as part of the broader digital solidarity economy and its intersection with global struggles for climate justice, labor rights, racial and gender equity, and democratic governance. In this context, cooperative data centers, hybrid public–cooperative infrastructures, AI cooperatives, and democratically governed cloud systems aren't built to scale like empires, but to last like communities.

5. Examples by Size, Sector, and Region

Platform cooperatives are not confined to a single geography, sector, or scale. They emerge wherever people reclaim digital tools to serve collective needs—shaped by local constraints, shared values, and a refusal to accept precarity as the cost of participation.

From small worker collectives to continent-spanning federations, these aren't hypothetical schemes scribbled on whiteboards. While many remain in early stages—and very many have failed—a surprising number have already scaled, operating as real-world platforms delivering concrete, evidence-backed gains to over a million workers.

Diverse Scope and Scale

Platform cooperatives span a wide range of sizes. Up & Go, a small professional home-cleaning cooperative in New York City, coordinates services through a shared digital infrastructure owned by its workers.In Scotland, a 200-member AI transcription cooperative has reclaimed value from data-intensive labor and is distinctive for open-sourcing its systems—allowing people to customize their own models and giving users and members a voice in how the technology is further developed through cooperative membership. In Belgium, a 35,000-member freelancer cooperative demonstrates how scale can coexist with democratic control. Elsewhere, legacy retail cooperatives like Italy's Coop and Switzerland's Migros—each with millions of members—are integrating digital platforms into long-standing cooperative ecosystems.

Sectoral Reach

Platform cooperatives and adjacent solidarity enterprises are taking shape in healthcare, care work, and telepsychiatry; in creative industries like music, design, and visual art; in the craft economy, among independent makers and artisans; and in education, through cooperative online learning platforms. They're also reshaping logistics and transportation—through ride-hailing and delivery cooperatives that challenge algorithmic management with democratic alternatives.

A Global Movement with Local Impact

Each local example offers a freeze-frame of a larger, moving picture—it's a set of grounded interventions responding to different forms of digital enclosure. What connects them is not their tech stack, but their ethos: a shared commitment to equity, cooperation, and democratic control. **From Nairobi to New York, São Paulo to San Francisco, platform cooperatives are building power—not by scaling like empires, but by taking root like communities**.

See an **infographic from 2018**

Impactful numbers

6,200,000

COOP Online
EasyCoop

90,000

Smart.coop

7,000

Drivers Coop (NYC, Colorado)

500

CoopCycle

Examples

CoopCycle

A federation of bike logistics cooperatives, CoopCycle aims to provide a concrete alternative built by couriers to raise new standards for the sharing economy. The platform offers logistical support and delivery services, focusing on ensuring fair pay, social protection, democratic governance, and value sharing among workers. Through this platform, CoopCycle ensures that over 50 cooperatives have access to a shared digital infrastructure that simplifies their work and helps couriers access better and fairer incomes.

Drivers Coop

This driver-owned ride-hailing cooperative in New York City (and now also Colorado) aims to end the exploitative conditions in the for-hire vehicle industry by placing workers in control of the platform economy. The platform allows drivers to be owners and takes only 15% from each ride to cover business overhead costs, compared to the 35% to 40% taken by traditional ride-hailing apps. Additionally, all workers have democratic control over decisions that impact their lives, ensuring that drivers remain empowered and engaged in shaping the platform's direction.

PescaData

This initiative aims to enhance data collection, communication, and financial decision-making among small-scale fishing organizations. The platform adopts a bottom-up, fisher-centric approach, offering a balanced scorecard to log daily fish catches, costs, and inputs. It also provides a space to share information on topics such as fishing gear, eco-certifications, and working standards. Ultimately, the software facilitates peer-to-peer knowledge sharing, enabling rapid scaling of actions.

The PescaData platform further emphasizes the importance of data collection by allocating value and funding to this process, ensuring that fishers are not only the owners of the data but also the primary beneficiaries. This approach prevents fishers from being mere sources of data, empowering them in the process.

Stocksy United

This artist-owned creative media agency provides royalty-free stock photography and stock video, utilizing a curated editing approach to select authentic and useful photos. The cooperative structure allows members to license creative content and receive 50% royalties on standard license sales, 75% on extended license sales, and year-end profit sharing through patronage returns. With 1,800 artists across over 80 countries, Stocksy's worker-centric model ensures that artists increase their income through fair pay and a strong sense of ownership.

CrossSense

CrossSense is an augmented reality smartglasses application that overlays contextual prompts—reminding people with dementia of tasks, objects and spatial cues. It is built and operated by Animorph Co-operative, a worker-owned platform co-op that uses on-device edge computing to process data while preserving privacy (end-users or purchasers are not members). Access to CrossSense is provided through licensing agreements with care organisations or direct purchase by families. Animorph's developer-members govern platform features, update schedules, data policies and financial matters. Because the co-op's primary activity is providing and maintaining this software platform, it follows a worker platform co-op model.

Groupmuse

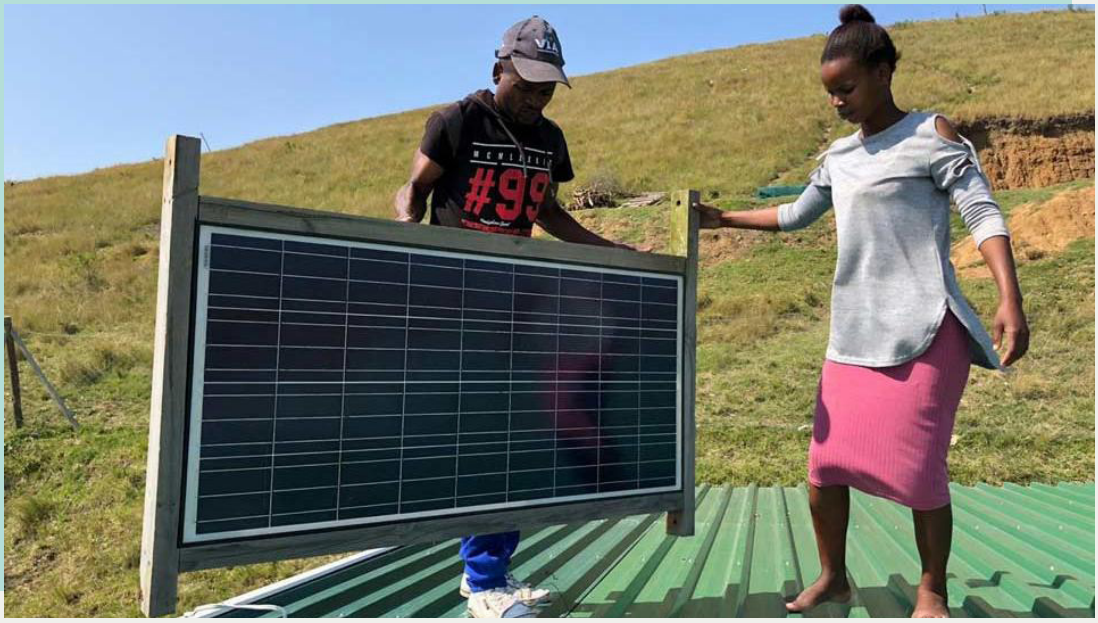
Groupmuse is a community-centered platform that rethinks classical music by bringing performances into intimate, informal venues—often living rooms or shared community spaces. Founded in the U.S., it connects musicians with local audiences and helps them organize concerts outside traditional institutions. Attendees contribute directly to the performers, creating a model that sustains artists while remaining accessible. By decentralizing performance spaces and encouraging grassroots participation, Groupmuse transforms classical music into a living, communal experience—less a recital than a gathering, where culture is not consumed but shared.

Up&Go Coop

A cooperatively owned platform that connects clients with high-quality cleaning professionals in New York City and Philadelphia. The platform brings together several cooperatively owned cleaning businesses, focusing on ensuring fair working conditions and livable wages in a sector typically characterized by low pay and precarious work. By empowering workers and emphasizing democratic design and governance, Up&Go Coop provides safer and better-paid conditions for cleaners that can double the income of workers.

Cooperative Digital Infrastructure

Beyond platform co-ops—whether data co-ops, labor platforms, or online marketplaces—there's also the underlying infrastructure, which in some cases is cooperatively owned. GAD eG, for instance, ran data centers for Germany's cooperative banks for over 50 years, while Your Co-op in the UK offers broadband and mobile services under a cooperative model. Similarly, Zenzeleni Networks in South Africa is a community-owned wireless internet service provider that has connected more than 13,000 people and 10 organizations to the internet in rural Eastern Cape province. And, of course, there are also tech cooperatives actively supporting and maintaining this broader ecosystem.



Zenzeleni- A community owned and operated ISP. Posted By Nzambi Kakusu. On Kincta Net

6. Testimonials

“ I joined the co-op, I was trapped in capitalism. The co-op gave me so much worth. When someone hires me or another cleaner, they get to work with the boss herself.”

— **Cirenia Dominguez**, Up&Go Cooperative

“I’m making fourteen pounds an hour at the moment [and] contributing five percent to the office. So, I’m making almost twice as much in the co-op.”

— **Daniel Cahill**, Equal Care Cooperative

“The cooperative rewards higher education with higher pay. Such extraordinary benefits are simply not available to non-union gig workers who are classified as independent contractors.”

— **Dianne Ocampo**, medical assistant at Kaiser Permanente Redwood City and AlliedUP worker-owner

“The co-op isn’t only work. It is a sisterhood.”

— **Worker** at Up&Go Cooperative

“Members of a co-op get sick less often, and when they do get sick, they are more likely to get treatment and they seek treatment earlier than people who aren’t in co-ops.”

— **Daniel Cahill**, Equal Care Cooperative

“The app allows fishers to select the data you want to share and who you are going to share [it] with. It is not just saying “Oh, well, I am going to give away all the data from my cooperative.”You select what you want to offer.”

— **Fisherman** form the Gulf of California, describing PescaData’s role in assisting small-scale fishers to control their own data.

7. Measuring PCC's Impact

Too often, the metrics used to define "success" focus on easily measurable outputs—like user growth or revenue—while overlooking the structural conditions faced by marginalized workers. This narrow focus can unintentionally reinforce the very inequalities it aims to address.

At PCC, we approach impact differently. We think in ecosystems, not silos—recognizing that meaningful change depends on long-term, interconnected efforts across sectors, communities, and tools. That's why we're cautious about relying on data that reflects systemic gaps without challenging the assumptions behind it. We confront deeply rooted barriers that cannot be dismantled with quick fixes.

This work demands patience, care, and long-term collaboration. It demands persistence. Since our founding in 2018, we have been developing and testing innovative models for lasting, equitable change—recognizing that meaningful economic impact emerges gradually, shaped over years and even decades, not in the span of months. We've initiated conversations around reimagining cooperative digitization, exploring how these approaches can reshape the digital economy for workers historically shut out. While much cannot be easily measured, the outcomes below reflect part of our impact.

Global Reach and Impact

1.2 million

workers in platform cooperatives

1.2 million workers are directly involved, and the enterprises serve millions more as clients.

2 million

people globally

The movement has **reached over 2 million people globally**—largely through partner organizations that have sparked conversations and supported practical experiments with platform cooperatives.

643 projects

53 countries

The PCC has directly inspired the launch of some of the over **643 digital cooperative projects across 53 countries**—projects that have benefited workers and communities by advancing cooperative ownership in the digital economy. These are only the active initiatives we're currently aware of; the broader landscape of experimentation is likely much larger. The number also includes the organizations that support them.

Global Reach and Impact

10 global conferences

23 countries

976 speakers

Since 2015, PCC has hosted **10 global conferences across 23 countries, featuring 976 speakers and reaching 291,000 people** through in-person attendance, live streams, YouTube broadcasts, online engagement, and photo documentation. These gatherings have connected **1,120 speakers: scholars and practitioners**, building solidaristic networks and strengthening communities. They have also generated a growing body of outputs—including declarations, academic papers, and syllabi—that **contribute to the development of the emerging academic field of digital solidarity economy studies**.

291,000 people

1,120 speakers

Global Reach and Impact

62 partner organizations

60 countries

Collaborations with **62 partner organizations across 60 countries** to strengthen the global movement.

900 collectives advised

Advised over **900 collectives** worldwide to explore and support the development of platform cooperatives.

Academic and Research Contributions

58 research fellows
16 countries

58 research fellows from **16 countries** (mostly Ph.D. students but also artists and founders),

Reports and papers

18,544 reads

Over **30 reports** by **Research Fellows** focused on **democratic governance**, **data justice**, and **solidarity-driven economic models** with **18,544 reads** across research papers, reports, and opinion pieces.

Building the academic subfield of digital solidarity economy studies

OECD Papers

OECD Papers: The PCC's influence on policy is reflected through citations of platform cooperatives and related research in the **UN Secretary-General's reports** on cooperatives (**2021**, **2019**), recent OECD policy papers (**local community development**, **employment**) and European Commission policy reports (**mapping the landscape of data intermediaries**).

Discussion paper

The ICA commissioned a **discussion paper** by **Ed Mayo** on platform cooperatives.

Media and Public Awareness

2,000
media items

1,939 media items on platform cooperatives, including articles, podcasts, academic papers, and more.

Prof. Scholz' TED talk on platform cooperatives has been viewed by **1.9 million people**.

1.9 million
people

180 PCC opinion pieces

Over **180 articles** in **English**, **Spanish**, and **French** available on the **PCC Blog**, including case studies and opinion pieces.

20,000 followers

The PCC's combined **social media following of 20,000** across platforms has expanded awareness and deepened engagement with digital solidarity economy studies among diverse global audiences.

Educational Impact

1850 students

60 countries

130+ student-led projects

Since 2020, **1,850 students from 60 countries** have participated in six innovative courses, including Platform Co-op School and Platform Co-ops Now! (with Mondragon University). These courses have resulted in **130+ student-led projects** globally.

New School composer Stefania de Kenessey created an **anthem for platform cooperativism**, with lyrics by McKenzie Wark based in part on *Uberworked*; performed in English and Spanish by local musicians at PCC conferences, it became a playful ritual for movement building.

Political and Policy Influence

7 countries

have included policy directives from platform cooperatives

Platform cooperatives have been included in **policy directives issued by seven individual countries**, and have also been acknowledged in discussions and official documents by multilateral forums such as the G7, G20, and United Nations. Details about these policy interventions are provided later in the report.

PCC Purpose and Impact

8. About the Platform Cooperativism Consortium

The Platform Cooperativism Consortium (PCC), established in 2018 at The New School, is a global think tank and organizing hub advancing cooperative alternatives within the digital economy. Through research, education, policy engagement, and international collaboration, PCC supports cooperatives, collectives, and solidarity economy groups in applying cooperative principles to labor platforms, data co-ops, and AI governance.

As a physical anchor for this work, PCC functions as a vital meeting ground for those reimagining ownership and power in the digital economy. It offers sustained engagement through public discourse, curated resources, and experimentation—advising policymakers and guiding organizations through the complexities of digital transformation while keeping cooperative values front and center.

Founded in 1919 by progressive thinkers like Alvin Johnson, Charles A. Beard, and John Dewey, **The New School** emerged as a hub for critical inquiry and social reform. This legacy of challenging orthodoxies guides the ongoing work of the Platform Cooperativism Consortium's mission to develop equitable, cooperative solutions in today's digital economy.

Other Hubs

Inspired by the broader platform cooperativism movement, including our contributions, sister organizations have sprung up in numerous countries. These include the earlier PCC Japan and **PCC Hong Kong** initiatives, as well as the currently active **Platform Cooperative Germany**, **La Plateformes en Communs (France)**, and the novel, buzzworthy **PCC Thailand**. Additionally, '**Unfound**,' spearheaded by Cooperatives UK, has been cultivating platform cooperatives for over three years, recently shifting its focus to scaling and ensuring the long-term sustainability of these ventures. **Start**, a US-based accelerator dedicated to scalable cooperatives, has supported numerous platform cooperatives. In Brazil, the Platform Co-op Observatory and DigiLabour have further strengthened the movement, while a temporary lab for platform cooperatives was also established at Mondragon University.

PCC Purpose and Impact

9. PCC: Global Community Organizing

The PCC Annual Conference is the premier global meeting place for the platform cooperativism movement—a yearly gathering where leading voices in cooperative technology, policy, activism, and art converge. Since 2015, it has driven collaboration and expanded the cooperative digital economy. Hosted in cities like Berlin, Hong Kong, New York City, Rio de Janeiro, Thiruvananthapuram, and Mombasa, each event is co-organized with local partners to address regional needs while maintaining a global vision.

What sets the conference apart is its seamless blend of **research**, **policy debates**, and **real-world case studies**—animated by artists and activists alongside scholars and industry leaders. Inspired by the **Fluxus art movement**, these gatherings are free and radically **inclusive**, ensuring open access to strategies for building a fairer digital economy.

Diversity is foundational: at least half of participants are women, and marginalized voices—shaped by **caste**, **race**, **gender**, and **youth**—are actively prioritized. But the PCC Annual Conference doesn't stop at discussion—it sparks action.

Each year, the PCC Annual Conference becomes more than a meeting—it's a global forge for collective projects, *digital solidarity economy studies* research, and resilient communities.

10. The PCC Conferences

Between 2015 and 2024, the PCC Annual Conference has been hosted across four continents, reflecting the global reach and impact of the platform cooperativism movement. Explore a comprehensive overview of all major conferences we've hosted—a resource that also includes links to key conferences on digital labor that laid the groundwork for the PCC movement.

Cooperative AI

November 11–14, 2025

Istanbul, Turkey

Focus: Cooperatives and AI

Website

Digital Africa Rising

November 6–8, 2024

Mombasa, Kenya

Focus: Credit Unions (Saccos) and Digital Overhaul of Co-ops

Website | **Program** | **Photo Log**

Roots of Resilience: Building Platform Co-Ops for Feminist Futures, Local Economies, Climate Justice, and Sustainable Agriculture

November 30–December 2, 2023

Thiruvananthapuram, India

Focus: Feminist Economic Justice and Climate Justice

Website | **Program** | **Photo Log**

Owning the Future: Sustainably Scaling Platform Cooperatives with the Global South

November 4–6, 2022

Museum of Tomorrow, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Focus: Scaling Platform Cooperatives and South-to-South Collaborations

Website | **Program** | **Photo Log**

The New Common Sense: Forging the Cooperative Digital Economy

November 12–18, 2021

Virtual & Berlin, Germany

Focus: Pandemic-Driven Responses and European Ecosystem

Website | **Program** | **Photo log**

PLATFORM COOPERATIVISM
BUILDING THE
THE PEOPLE'S DISRUPTION
PLATFORM
谁拥有这个世界? WHO OWNS THE WORLD? दुनिया का मालिक कौन है? ¿QUIÉN ES EL DUEÑO DEL MUNDO? পৃথিবীর মালিক কে? КТО ВЛАДЕЕТ МИРОМ? 誰が世界を所有していますか? QUEM É DONO DO MUNDO? વિશ્વનો માલિક કોણ છે? QUI LE MONDE APPARTIENT À

Who Owns the World? The State of Platform Cooperativism

November 7–9, 2019

The New School, New York, USA

Focus: Antitrust & Data Sovereignty

Website | **Program** | **Photo Log**

Sowing the Seeds: Platform Cooperativism for Asia

September 28–29, 2018

Chinese University of Hong Kong, China

Focus: Platform Cooperatives in East Asia and the PCC Hong Kong Coopathon

Website | **Program** | **Photo Log**

The People's Disruption: Platform Co-ops for Global Challenges

November 10–11, 2017

The New School, New York, USA

Focus: Cooperative Digital Infrastructures

Website | **Program** | **Photo Log**

Fourth in the series of The New School's digital labor conferences
PLATFORM COOPERATIVISM BUILDING THE COOPERATIVE INTERNET
NOV 11-13 2016
THE NEW SCHOOL
CIVIC HALL

Platform Cooperativism: Building the Cooperative Internet

November 11–13, 2016
The New School, New York, USA
Focus: Coop Data and Policy

Website | **Program** | **Photo Log**

Platform Cooperativism: The Internet. Ownership. Democracy.

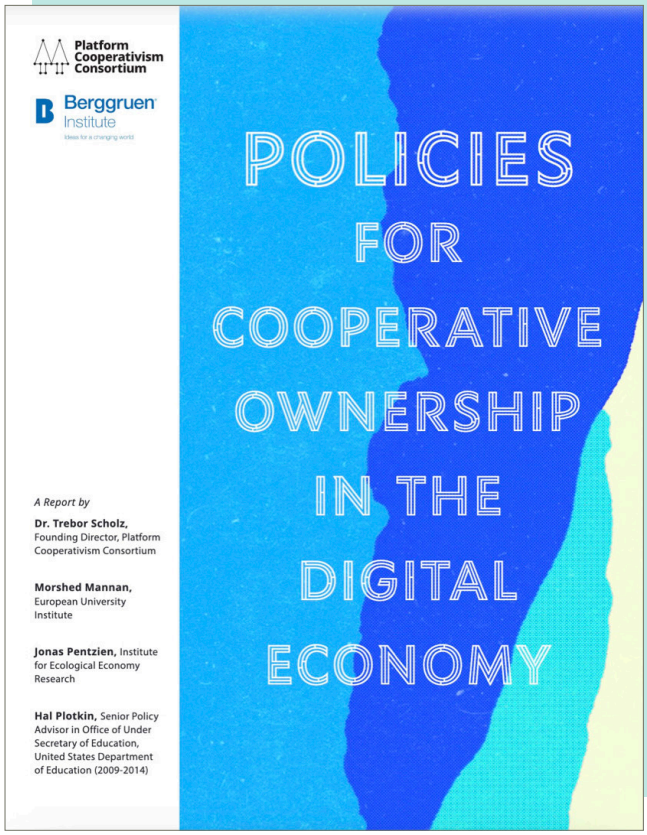
November 13–14, 2015
The New School, New York, USA
Focus: Introducing Platform Cooperativism

Website | **Program** | **photo log**

Beyond these conferences, PCC programming included an event with Noam Chomsky, where he expressed his desire to contribute to the platform cooperativism movement; an in-depth discussion on Italian social cooperatives with Vera Negri Zamagni; and a symposium in Barcelona with PCC and Suara exploring how platform cooperatives could strengthen Catalonia's social economy.

11. Policy and Advocacy

PCC's policy approach starts where change appears most feasible: the municipal level. In many regions, especially where federal systems are tangled in inertia, local governments offer a path to swift legislative reform. This is why we emphasize municipal-cooperative hybrids—structures that marry democratic ownership with civic infrastructure. In the so-called Global South, the strategy expands outward: advocating for cross-border legal frameworks that allow platform cooperatives to operate across national lines. These efforts are not isolated—they form part of a broader agenda rooted in the right to well-being, access to sustenance, education (including digital literacy), and a livable environment.


Platform Cooperativism Consortium
Berggruen Institute
POLICIES FOR COOPERATIVE OWNERSHIP IN THE DIGITAL ECONOMY
A Report by
Dr. Trebor Scholz, Founding Director, Platform Cooperativism Consortium
Morshed Mannan, European University Institute
Jonas Pentzien, Institute for Ecological Economy Research
Hal Plotkin, Senior Policy Advisor in Office of Under Secretary of Education, United States Department of Education (2009-2014)

In collaboration with the Berggruen Institute in Los Angeles, PCC led the development of a policy paper titled "**Policy Recommendations To Support Community Ownership in the Digital Economy**." This 86-page document, with 2074 tracked reads, was a joint effort with PCC and offers actionable insights to empower municipalities to assist platform co-ops. It draws on examples from six countries and advocates for governmental interventions such as preferential procurement policies, solidarity lending, and legal reforms. These measures aim to foster cooperative

development and provide a level playing field against well-funded private platforms. The paper includes case studies from California, Kerala, Barcelona, Bologna, Berlin, Paris, and Preston—regions with strong platform cooperative activities and varied cooperative economics approaches, providing a blueprint to transform economic structures and tackle the bottlenecks of the gig economy.

PCC's contribution to reforming cooperative law in the United Arab Emirates is evident in the enactment of UAE's **Federal Decree-Law No. 6** of 2022. Roles played by two alumni fellows and a Council of Advisors member from PCC were instrumental in this reform. Notably, Article 5 of the law now allows 8,722,000 non-citizen residents from over 200 nationalities in the UAE to engage in economic activities through cooperatives, specifically enabling them to establish platform co-ops, an important change from the otherwise restrictive conditions on their work and self-organization.

The OECD's recognition of platform cooperatives in fostering local development and good jobs underscores the growing backing of PCC's policy stances. In 2023, the OECD hosted webinars discussing the role of platform cooperatives in fostering local development and good jobs, signifying a notable level of assistance from policy circles, which include government representatives from multiple countries. The impact of PCC on policy is also evident through citations of platform cooperatives and writings in UN Secretary General reports on cooperatives (2021, 2019), as well as recent OECD policy papers on local community development, employment, and European Commission policy reports on mapping the landscape of data intermediaries.

In Kerala, India, the "Comprehensive Programme for Employment of the Educated Unemployed" was launched in 2021, **aiming to create 4,000 platform cooperatives** to enhance job opportunities and foster a more equitable gig economy in the region. PCC's involvement in this endeavor was directly influenced by the **2019 address to Kerala's Legislative Assembly**, where the integration of platform cooperatives into the state's employment strategies was advocated. This talk played a pivotal role in shaping the 2021 policy, underscoring the result of advocacy and expert guidance in legislative developments.

Similarly, during his campaign, President Lula da Silva of Brazil ardently championed platform cooperatives, calling for a hybrid public-cooperative platform model. This approach emphasizes proactive city support for co-op development through startup assistance and ongoing support, particularly

via procurement. PCC also provided advisory support to Brazil's Minister of the Solidarity Economy. Additionally, PCC keynoted at several Brazilian co-op conferences, including one in Brasília—a decennial gathering of the cooperative movement—and another in 2023 to 2,000 attendees in Belo Horizonte, underscoring the movement's significance. PCC's advisory efforts also extended to Argentina, where we advised the Workers' Party, shaping the legislative proposal for a model law for worker platform cooperatives, which was discussed in the Argentine Congress.

Jeremy Corbyn's "**Digital Democracy Manifesto**" from 2016 clearly identified platform cooperatives as one of the ten key points in reforming the UK's digital economy, advocating for cooperative ownership of digital platforms. While Keir Starmer's Labour Party has not emphasized this aspect as strongly, it continues to advocate for this vision within its broader digital strategy. Andrea Nahles, the then-leader of Germany's second-largest party, invited PCC to her Berlin headquarters. During this visit, she expressed how well PCC's work aligned with the party's values, leading to a **"policy impulse" lecture on digital capitalism**, delivered alongside Nahles and attended by hundreds of journalists. Notably, the services of data cooperatives—central to PCC's mission—are now explicitly recognized in the **EU's Data**

Governance Act, marking a shift in institutional acknowledgment of their role in shaping equitable data economies.

As part of a series of policy initiatives, PCC began with a consultation at the Obama White House on the gig economy, which led to a briefing on platform cooperatives for the G7 Labor Ministers during the G7 Ministerial on Industry and ICT in Turin, Italy, in September 2017. PCC also presented to the Italian Parliament's Innovation Committee. Our engagement continued at the same G7 Ministerial in Turin, where, following an invitation from the Italian Labor Minister, PCC had an extended conversation with the French Minister of Labor. This conversation focused on the importance of supporting grassroots players in the cooperative sector in France, emphasizing the need to support smaller initiatives.

While these efforts didn't initially result in policy changes, they played a critical role in raising awareness and garnered media attention on Italian and Iranian television, coinciding with the launch of Iran's first platform cooperative. Furthermore, PCC's expertise has been sought by various entities, including consultations with the City Councils of Melbourne and San Francisco, the Mayor of Paris, the Spanish Chamber of Commerce, and the Indonesian government. These roles underline PCC's extensive involvement in shaping technological policies and cooperative strategies globally.

Policies for Cooperative Ownership in the Digital Economy

Policy Paper by:

R. Trebor Scholz (The New School)

Morshed Mannan (European University Institute)

Jonas Pentzien (Institute for Ecological Economy Research)

Hal Plotkin (Senior Policy Advisor, U.S. Department of Education, 2009–2014)

Published by the **Platform Cooperativism Consortium (PCC)** and the **Berggruen Institute/USC**, this policy report advocates for **worker- and customer-owned platform cooperatives** as solutions to the challenges of the gig economy, with a specific focus on how **municipalities** can support these models. It calls for local governments to provide support through **preferential procurement**, **financing**, **legal reforms**, and **public benefits** to help cooperatives compete with dominant platforms. Case studies from cities like **California**, **Kerala**, **Barcelona**, **Bologna**, **Berlin**, **Paris**, and **Preston** offer practical strategies for municipal implementation.

Read here (PDF)

12. Education

Despite the growing relevance of cooperative models in the digital economy, business and law schools have largely neglected them, leaving a critical gap in professional education. Responding to this need, the Platform Cooperativism Consortium (PCC) developed a series of initiatives—from Platform Co-ops Now! to new legal frameworks at Harvard and Columbia—designed to make cooperative ownership a practical, accessible option for students, practitioners, and policymakers around the world. The following overview traces the evolution of these efforts across education, research, and community-building.

Platform Co-ops Now!

Amid the global demand for cooperative business education during the COVID-19 pandemic, PCC launched Platform Co-ops Now! with Mondragon University, reaching 1,603 students across 60 countries in five languages and generating 112 student-led projects. PCC developed lecture content while Mondragon led incubation workshops using lean startup methods, with a flexible, localized format—live interpreters, regional partners, and tailored curricula—that expanded access and relevance, especially across Latin America.

PCC created lecture content while Mondragon led practical workshops using lean startup methods, all within a flexible, localized structure—complete with live interpreters and regional partnerships—that broadened access, boosted enrollment, and drew a diverse mix of policymakers, researchers, and students, now part of a global alumni network extending PCC's reach. Learn more about **Platform Coops Now!**. Read a reflection on the course **here**. Testimonials here: **Esther** (Salt Lake City, US), **Sumire** (Aichi, Japan), **Omaria** (Philadelphia), **Hsiao-Ying** (Taiwan), **Faiza** (Cape Town), and **Vikramjit** (Punjab, India).

Platform Co-op School

The Platform Co-op School was established as a way to continue engaging with people actively working in platform cooperatives. It brought together public programming, New School courses, and ICDE offerings that extend beyond traditional academic settings. In 2023, the school united over 45 partner organizations from 25 countries, offering 22 learning sessions—including theory jams, community assemblies, seminars, and business courses—designed to support those already involved in the cooperative movement. Learn more about Platform Coop School **here**.

ICDE Courses

ICDE also offers courses for practitioners, in multiple languages. Translation and scholarship availability are part of our commitment to knowledge sharing and a more democratic access.

In the effort to provide a business-oriented view that caters to the whole platform cooperative ecosystem, some courses were also developed targeting farmers and cooperatives. In addition to specific knowledge about the sector, full scholarships were offered to Historically Underserved Farmers, Ranchers, Cooperators, Cooperative Developers, and those working in adjacent/related sectors based in the United States.

Learning Experiences for Historically Underserved Farmers, Ranchers, and their Allies

Leverage Generative AI for Your Cooperative
Read

27 Lessons from The Drivers Cooperative
Read

Founders Unplugged
Read

The Future of Farming
Read

Joining Online Marketplaces for Farmers
Read

Data-Driven Resilience for Small Farms
Read

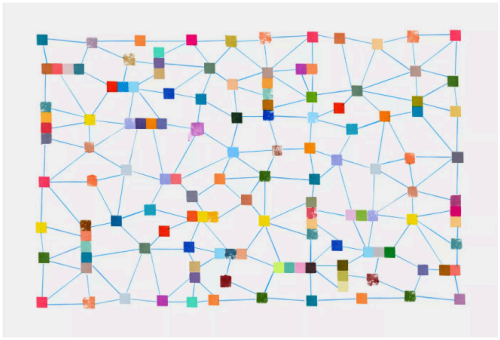
Open-Agriculture, AI, and Data
Read

Legal Frameworks for Platform Cooperatives at CyberClinic

Picture this: in the halls of Harvard Law School, students and legal experts gather to tackle the legal challenges of worker-owned digital platforms. In April 2018, invited by Professor Chris Bavitz, the Platform Cooperativism Consortium (PCC) served as a client for the Harvard Cyberlaw Clinic to explore legal frameworks for platform cooperatives. Separately, PCC also launched a working group on platform cooperativism at Harvard, opening new discussions on the topic.

At Columbia Law School, Professor Katharina Pistor and her students supported this work by developing innovative legal structures for cooperative ownership.

PCC-Berkman Klein Center Research Sprint



HOME ›

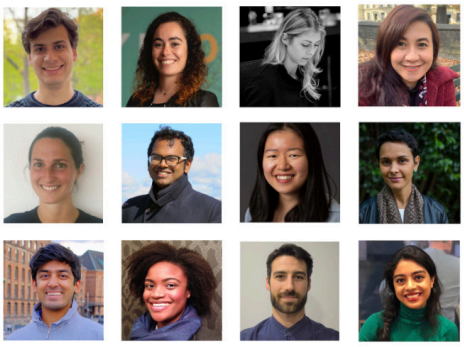
Research Sprint Explores Cooperative Approaches to Data Ownership and Governance

RESEARCHERS AND PRACTITIONERS FROM AROUND THE WORLD INVESTIGATE THE DESIGN AND DILEMMAS OF DATA TRUSTS AND COOPERATIVES AND HOW THEY CAN HELP COMMUNITIES

Oct 5, 2021

SHARE TO

The New School's Platform Cooperativism Consortium and Harvard University's Berkman Klein Center for Internet & Society are launching a Fall 2021 Research Sprint this week with a cohort of early-career researchers, cooperative leaders, and activists from 8 countries across 4 continents. The "Alternative Data Futures: Cooperative Principles, Data Trusts, and the Digital Economy" Research Sprint brings together this group to explore new pathways for democratic governance of collective data.



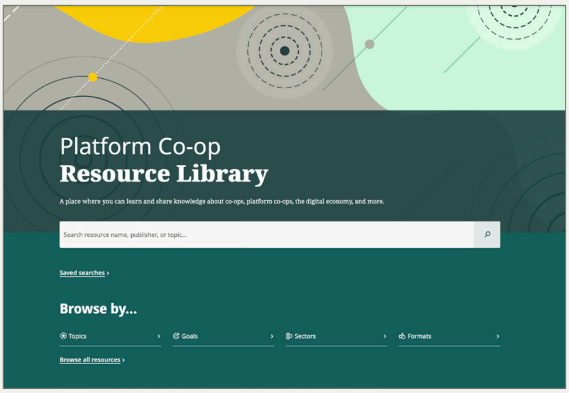
In the fall of 2021, PCC and the Berkman Klein Center co-organized **Alternative Data Futures: Cooperative Principles, Data Trusts, and the Digital Economy,** a Research Sprint convening scholars, cooperative leaders, and activists from eight countries. This initiative explored the democratic governance of collective data, addressing legal, social, and technological challenges. The sprint **produced both academic contributions** and **practical strategies**, expanding global discourse on data ownership and cooperative governance.

Discussions on the convergence of cooperatives and blockchain technology led to the creation of **an open-access syllabus** and several publications.

PCC Purpose and Impact

13. Resource Building

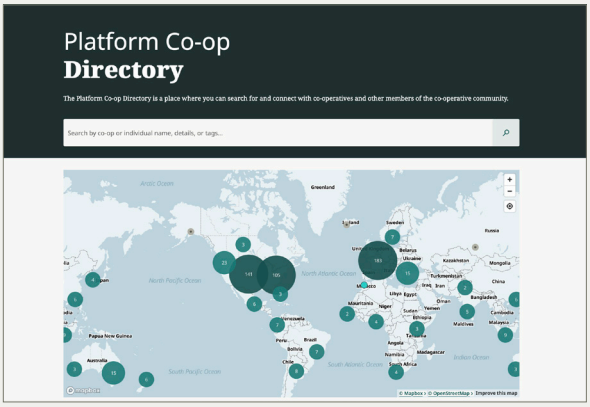
Resource Library



PCC actively curates and expands a dynamic library of nearly **2,000 academic papers**, **articles**, **podcasts**, **videos**, and **books** focusing on the digital economy and cooperative principles, featuring key contributions from organizations like the OECD.

Explore more: **Platform Co-op Resource Library**

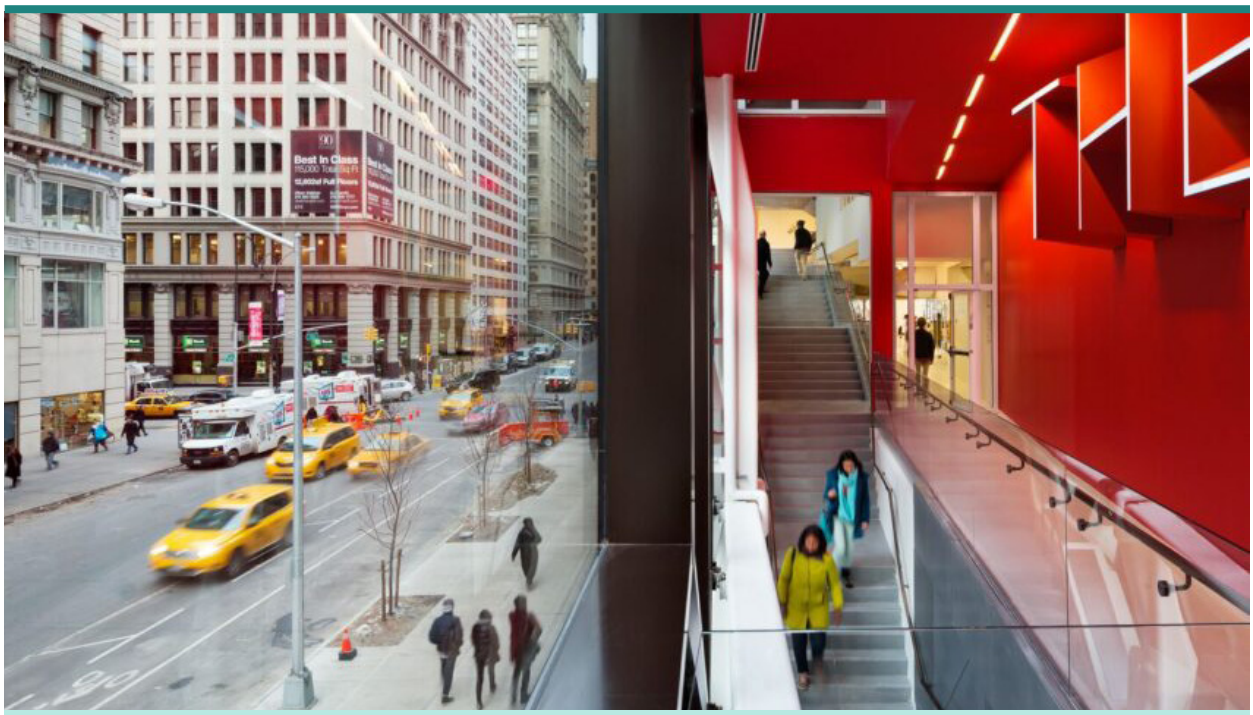
Platform Co-op Directory


Platform Co-op
Directory
The Platform Co-op Directory is a place where you can search for and connect with co-operatives and other members of the co-operative community.
Search by co-op or individual name, details, or tags...

PCC actively maintains and regularly updates the Platform Co-op Directory—a searchable guide to the global cooperative digital economy that helps users discover and connect with co-ops and community members worldwide. It's a tremendous, if largely thankless, task that keeps the movement visible and connected. Browse the directory **here**.

14. Research

Institute for the Cooperative Digital Economy (ICDE)



The Institute for Cooperative Digital Economy (ICDE) at The New School, established in 2019 as the research division of the Platform Cooperativism Consortium (PCC), is dedicated to addressing critical research gaps in the cooperative digital economy. Created to separate research from the PCC's advocacy, community organizing, and education initiatives, ICDE serves as a resource for platform cooperatives, policymakers, and emerging scholars.

ICDE conducts cross-disciplinary research in areas such as anthropology, political science, sociology, history, law, and economics, all of which are relatively uncharted territories in the context of the emerging cooperative digital economy. This rapidly expanding field is also inextricably linked to labor and cooperative studies.

By providing platform cooperatives with applied and theoretical knowledge, education, and policy analysis, ICDE develops new ideas for a fair future of work based on relevant research and imaginative proposals. To further its mission, ICDE runs a fellowship program, currently in its sixth cohort, which includes Ph.D. students, junior faculty, and postdoctoral researchers focusing on the intersection of cooperative principles and the digital economy. The Institute has also influenced policy thinking and the vision of major political parties in several countries, contributing to the advancement of platform ownership and democratic governance for both workers and internet users. Learn more **here**.

The ICDE and PCC are key hubs for research, dialogue, and community building on the future of work, recognized for supporting scholars, technologists, policymakers, and cooperators.

The ICDE Fellowship

Our work has contributed to the emergence of *digital solidarity economy studies*, a new subfield within labor studies, focusing on platform capitalism and the platform economy, with an emphasis on worker and user ownership of platforms and community-driven business models. Scholars such as Tarleton Gillespie and Sarah Roberts have explored the evolving responsibilities and emotional impacts of platform moderation, while Tom Slee's *What's Yours Is Mine* examines the broader implications of the sharing economy. Frank Pasquale's *The Black Box Society* addresses the transparency of algorithms, and Ethan Zuckerman's *Digital Cosmopolitans* discusses the potential for public internet infrastructure. Further contributions by scholars like Douglas Rushkoff, Siva Vaidhyanathan, and Nick Srnicek address issues such as technological inequality and the monopolistic behaviors of platform giants. At the same time, Veena Dubal and Niels van Doorn shed light on the precariousness inherent in gig work, helping to advance understanding of labor, culture, and commerce in the digital age.

Pioneering a New Subfield in Academia: *Solidarity Tech*

Building on these perspectives, we introduced the concept of “Platform Coops,” which has since expanded to “Solidarity Tech,” as part of *digital solidarity economy studies*. This area focuses on collective ownership and cooperative principles in digital startups. It has inspired numerous Ph.D. dissertations and has led us to create a global intellectual community, including scholars from the Global South, that has significantly advanced the field. We are co-editing a special journal issue dedicated to this emerging area of study.

At our research institute, we have built a network of 54 research fellows and Affiliate Faculty, enriching the academic environment by integrating their work into our teaching and facilitating connections between students and emerging scholars for practical engagement in the field.

The research at the Institute for the Cooperative Digital Economy (ICDE) spans a diverse range of topics related to platform cooperatives, solidarity economies, and inclusive economic development. **Fellows engage in studies that address legal, political, and social challenges faced by marginalized groups, including refugees, undocumented workers, and women, through innovative cooperative models**. The research highlights the transformative potential of platform cooperatives in the Global South, as well as the integration of new technologies like decentralized autonomous organizations (DAOs) to enhance cooperative governance. Notable areas of focus include the history and future of cooperatives in climate justice, municipal policy frameworks, data cooperatives, and the impact of platform cooperatives on local economies, especially in countries like India, Brazil, and Argentina. Fellows also explore the adaptation of cooperative principles in sectors like agriculture, transportation, and cultural work, all while addressing the pressing need for legal reforms to enable equitable access to opportunities. The research emphasizes the urgent need for legal reforms to ensure marginalized groups can access cooperative opportunities and fully participate in cooperative ventures. This work builds on and has been supported by Prof. Trebor Scholz's foundational contributions to cooperativism—developed across five books.

Photo log of launch I **ICDE at 5 Symposium**

ICDE Fellowship Reports

LEGALIZE GLOBAL CO-OPS
REDEFINING THE CONCEPT OF AN "ETHICAL BUSINESS"
EVERY THING OLD IS NEW AGAIN
DAOS AND PLATFORM COOPERATIVES
—
LESSONS FROM THE COMMONS
A POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR PLATFORM COOPERATIVES
—
GROUNDED IN U.S. HISTORY

Examples of fellow papers include **"Legalize Global Co-ops"** by Santosh Kumar Padmanabhan, "**Redefining the Concept of an 'Ethical Business'**" by Amelia Evans, "**Everything Old is New Again**" by Morshed Mannan, "**DAOs and Platform Cooperatives – Lessons from the Commons**" by Philemon Poux, "The Politics of Platform Cooperativism" by Jonas Pentizen (read 2,191 times), and "**A Policy Framework**

for Platform Cooperatives – Grounded in U.S History" by Sadev Parikh, underscored the diversity and depth of inquiry produced under the ICDE's guidance. The cumulative trackable readership for these papers reached 18,544. **Access all ICDE papers here**

As highlighted by former ICDE fellow, Morshed Mannan, a Max Weber Postdoctoral Fellow at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, "The work of the PCC has been transformational for me as an early-career researcher. As an ICDE research fellow, I not only completed a research report on two prominent platform cooperatives, but also became part of an active, international network with other cooperators, scholars, and activists. The collaborations that ensued from this fellowship enriched my Ph.D. dissertation and supported my interests in cooperative governance and policy, as well as led to new friendships."

Other ICDE publications include *Platform Co-ops in India: Cases of Gujarat and Kerala (read here), Platform Co-op Markets: A Study on Kudumbashree in Kerala* (read **here**), and *Platform Cooperativism in Brazil: Dualities, Dialogues, and Opportunities*, available in both **English** and **Portuguese**.

ICDE Fellows

Akkanut Wantanasombut

Chulalongkorn University

Anne-Pauline de Cler

Sciences Po

Alejandro Fortuny-Sicart

University of Vigo

Cecilia Muñoz Cancela

University of Buenos Aires

Amelia Evans

Harvard Law School

Denise Kasparian

University of Buenos Aires

Andrea Peña Calvin

Complutense University

Dorleta Urrutia-Onate

University of Deusto

Erik Forman

CUNY

Harinjaka A Ratozamanana

University of Provence, Aix-Marseille I

Eve O'Connor

Harvard University

J. Acosta

Universidad Iberoamericana

Francis Mwongla Mikwa

Cooperative University of Kenya

Jad Esber

Harvard Business School, Cambridge

Ganesh Gopal

Gandhigram Rural Institute

Jared Mark Matabi

Cooperative University of Kenya

George Oates

London

Jeongone (Joh) Seo

Sungkyunkwan University / Rutgers University

Jonas Pentzien

Berlin Social Science Center

Lila Gaudêncio

University of Cambridge

Josie West

Kings College

Linda Huber

University of Michigan

Katarzyna Cieslik

University of Manchester

Lokyung Wong

Hong Kong

Katya Abazajian

University of Texas at Austin

Louis Cousin

Laval University, Canada, and Paris-Saclay University, France

Kenzo Soares Seto

Yale Law School

Luciana Bruno

Rio de Janeiro

Maïmonatou Mar

University of Bordeaux

Morshed Mannan

Edinburgh University and European University Institute

Mark Esposito

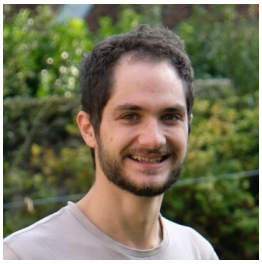
École des Ponts in Paris

Mosa Tsay

The Juilliard School

Michelle Lee

Northwestern University



Philemon Poux

University of Paris

Minsun Ji

University of Colorado Boulder

Pietro Ghirlanda

University of Milan

Mohit Dave

University of Delhi

Rafael Zanatta

University of São Paulo

Sadev Parikh

Georgetown University Law Center and Harvard Kennedy School

Stefan Ivanovski

Cornell University

Salonie Hiriyur Muralidhara

University of Essex

Shaked Spier

University of Twente

Santosh Kumar

University of Turin

Stefano Tortorici

Scuola Normale Superiore

Sain Lopez

Mondragon University

Stuart Fulton

COBI

Priyanka Borar

Bangalore

Tara Merk

CNRS/Panthéon-Assas University Paris II

Udayan Tandon

University of California, San Diego

Vangelis Papadimitropoulos

University of Athens

Vera Vidal

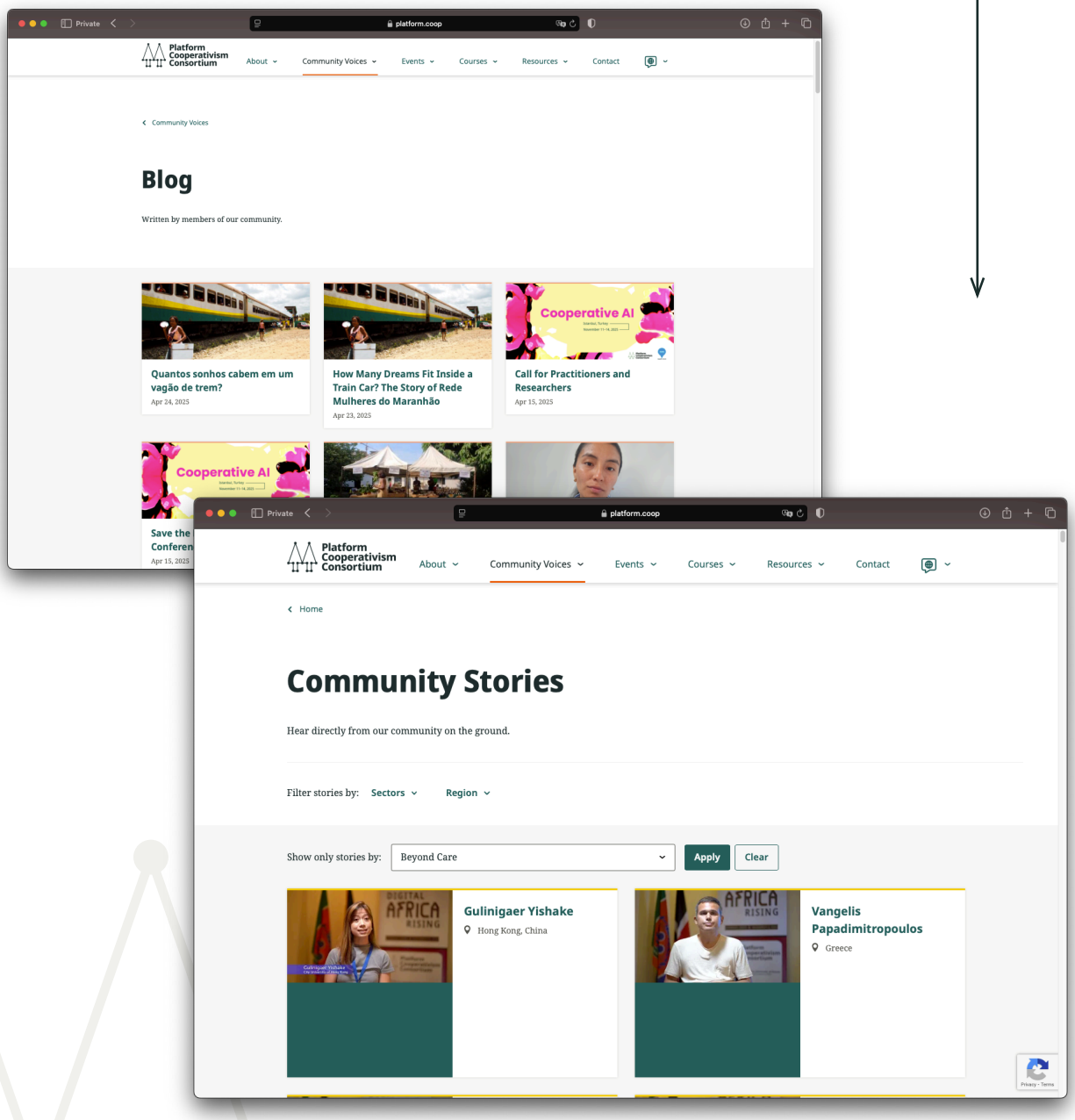
Open University of Catalonia

Victor Barcellos

Federal University of Rio de Janeiro

15. Opinion Pieces and Video Interviews

Our website offers over 180 opinion pieces and case studies supporting the cooperative ecosystem, along with more than 120 short videos capturing key ideas from our conference speakers—each about 3 minutes long and viewed tens of thousands of times.



16. Testimonials about PCC

"Many corporate platforms now operate on a truly global scale. If we are to create meaningful, sustainable, worker-centred alternatives we therefore need to organize our efforts at the global level. The PCC is a crucial infrastructure to do exactly that."

— **Prof. Mark Graham**, Oxford University

"The Platform Cooperativism Consortium has brought critical resources, networking, tools, policy, and guidance to SEIU-UHW over the past several years as our Local has explored creative new ways to support worker ownership and platform cooperative workforce models for unionized and other workers."

— **Ra Criscitiello**, SEIU-UHW West, USA

“The PCC/ICDE has enabled me to connect with a global community of researchers, activists working on ideas of cooperativism, solidarity and other worker-led alternatives. The community has pushed me to think harder and deeper about my own work, engage with a variety of different theories, methods of research. The space that PCC has helped create is one of mutual growth, care, and generosity. “

— **Salonie Muralidhara Hiriyur**, SEWA Cooperative Federation and Institute of Development Studies (IDS), India

“The PCC/ICDE is doing tremendous work on all fronts: funding, community building, community outreach, lobbying, research, training, etc. I think what makes PCC/ICDE special is the sense of community building, the sense of cooperation and not being competitive with each other. Also all the valuable work on all fronts.”

— **vangelis papadimitropoulos**, Ph.D. Panteion University, Greece

“I recommend PCC/ICDE for its exceptional knowledge offerings, immersive experiences, and invaluable network. It stands as a pioneering institute dedicated to studying the digital cooperative economy, making it a must-engage platform for those passionate about this field.”

— **Ratozamanana A. Harinjaka**, Madagascar

“PCC/ICDE had a positive impact on me personally and professionally because it allowed me to abandon my research on inclusive finance to focus on the cooperative digital economy. This transformation allowed our organization to prioritize digital technology and telecommunications infrastructures.”

— **Jean Christian NYEMB**, Founder and President of Alliance Coopératives Cameroun (COOP-CAMEROON)

17. What's Next

Looking ahead, the PCC will extend its reach across Africa, Asia, and Latin America—not as a distant overseer but as a collaborator embedded in local rhythms. Strategies will be shaped from the ground up, attentive to the particular legal quirks and infrastructural improvisations of each region. Municipal policy labs—drawing inspiration from Kerala's grassroots dynamism and Barcelona's digital democracy—will become testing grounds for ideas that can travel without losing their core commitments.

In the short term, we'll continue what we've begun: convening the annual PCC conferences not as isolated events but as temporary campsites—brief shelters where ideas can gather warmth before being set back into motion. Our fellowship program will expand, not merely as a pipeline for talent but as a staging ground for shared inquiry. Community programming continues, including the upcoming course on cooperative AI—an effort not just to teach tools, but to ask who those tools are built for, and under what assumptions.

The medium term demands more. We aim to stitch our work into the fabric of broader social movements—not just as a technical adjunct but as a co-conspirator. This means embracing a clearer, more candid political stance. Politics as a reckoning with power: who has it, who doesn't, and how it's distributed through code, institutions, and narratives.

And in the long run, the vision stretches. In regions where this work has already taken root—in cooperative workshops, civic tech labs, neighborhood assemblies—we see the early contours of something larger: municipal ecosystems that could one day speak to one another across distance. These networks won't be mere infrastructure—they'll be political organisms, shaped by the needs and imaginations of those who live within them. Platforms, protocols, and digital commons stitched together not by efficiency, but by solidarity.

18. People

Council of Advisors

The advisory group, composed of global leaders from academia, cooperative organizations, and policy-making, provides strategic guidance to steer PCC, with advisors serving two-year terms.

Anita Gurumurthy	Director, IT for Change
Anh-Thu Nguyen	Director of Strategic Partnerships, Democracy at Work Institute
Balu G. Iyer	International Cooperative Alliance
David Park	Dean of Strategic Initiatives, Columbia University
Esteban Kelly	US Federation of Worker Cooperatives
Fabro Steibel	ITS Rio de Janeiro
Hal Plotkin	Open Policy Fellow at Creative Commons, USA & former Senior Policy Advisor in the Office of the Under Secretary of Education
Howard Brodsky	CCA Global Partners
Jack Qiu	Platform Cooperativism Consortium HK, Nanyang Technical University Singapore
Jason Spicer	Assistant Professor, Baruch University
Janet Roitman	Professor, RMIT
Mark Graham	Professor, Oxford Internet Institute
Marina Gorbis	Institute for the Future
Matthew Brown	Preston City Council Leader - Labour, Plungington/Unite Union and Coop Party member
Osamu Nakano	Director of International Relations at Japan Workers' Cooperative Union/Japan Cooperative Alliance
Scott Heiferman	Co-founder and Chairman of Meetup
Teepee Gile	Co-Founder and CEO, Red Root Artists Cooperative
Wilma Liebman	Former Chair of the National Labor Relation Board
Yash Kanoria	Associate Professor, Columbia University

Learn more about the people at the PCC **here**

ICDE Affiliate Faculty

Damien Jonathan Bunders	Assistant Professor, Governance of Urban Digitalization
Denise Kasparian	Assistant Professor, University of Buenos Aires
Esther N. Gicheru	Director, Institute of Co-operative Development, Co-operative University of Kenya
Facundo Picabea	Senior Researcher at the National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET)
Gabriella Rendón	Affiliate Faculty, Institute for the Cooperative Digital Economy
Ifigeneia Douvitsa	Lecturer, Hellenic Open University
Isaac K. Nyamongo	Scholar and Deputy Vice Chancellor, The Co-operative University of Kenya
Javier Arroyo Gallardo	Associate professor in computer science, Universidad Complutense de Madrid
Jessica Gordon-Nembhard	Author, Professor, John Jay College, City University of NY
Johanna Mair	Professor at Hertie School and Co-Director at Stanford University's Global Innovation for Impact Lab
Jose Mari Luzarraga	Co-founder, Mondragon Team Academy – MTA World – and Professor, Mondragon University
Julia Ticona	Assistant Professor
Lucy N. Maina Kiganane	Senior Lecturer, Director of Postgraduate Studies, The Co-operative University of Kenya
Marisa Jahn	Assistant Professor of Design Strategies, Parsons School of Design
Mark Graham	Professor of Internet Geography, Oxford Internet Institute

Mia White	Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies, The New School for Public Engagement
Raz Godelnik	Associate Professor of Strategic Design and Management, The New School)
Samer Hassan	Associate Professor, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, and Faculty Associate at Harvard's Berkman Klein Center
Simon Pek	Associate Professor of Business and Society, University of Victoria
Thomas Daum	Associate Professor at the School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg
Tim Christiaens	Assistant Professor of Economic Ethics, Tilburg University
Vasilis Kostakis	Professor, Tallinn University of Technology
Virginia Doellgast	Anne Evans Estabrook Professorship of Employment Relations and Dispute Resolution, Cornell University's ILR School

19. Our Community

The Platform Cooperativism Consortium (PCC) has built a broad global network of partners and collaborators across dozens of countries.

Notable partners include Mondragon University, the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), International Cooperative Alliance Africa, International Cooperative Alliance Asia-Pacific, SEWA Cooperative Federation, United States Federation of Worker Cooperatives (USFWC), Smart.coop, IT for Change in Bangalore, Co-operatives UK, and NCBA CLUSA (National Cooperative Business Association CLUSA International). Academic collaborations feature the Center for Civic Media at MIT, Oxford Internet Institute, Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University, Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations' Institute for the Study of Employee Ownership and Profit Sharing, Humboldt University, WZB Berlin Social Science Center, ITS Rio de Janeiro, Universidade Federal do Paraná, and the Cooperative University of Colombia.

The PCC's extensive partner network also includes Aapti Institute (India), Autonomy Think Tank (UK), BlockchainGov ERC Project (France), Centre for Cultural Research and Development at Lingnan University (Hong Kong), COBI (Mexico), Coompanion Sverige (Sweden), Cooperative Support Services (Nigeria), CyberMonday (UK), Democracy Collaborative (US), diesis (EU), Dimmons.net (Spain), Exit to Community (US), Fairwork (Global), Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana (Slovenia), Futurist Circle (China), Fundación Confiar (Colombia), FORUS Platform Coop (South Africa/Switzerland), Gest.coop (Spain), HYPHA Worker Co-operative (Canada), India China Institute at The New School

(US), Institute on Race, Power, & Political Economy at The New School (US), Institute of Network Cultures (Netherlands), Maison des Cooperatives Togo (Togo), Malta Co-operative Federation, Manipal Academy of Higher Education (India), NeedsMap (Turkey), New Citizenship Project (UK), OwnCo (Germany), Peru Tres i Coop (Peru), RedRoots artists cooperative (Philippines), Solidarity Hall (US), Srishti Manipal Institute of Art & Technology (India), Start.coop (US), STARTIN' BLOX (Belgium), The Israeli Cooperatives Alliance for Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice (Israel), The University of Edinburgh School of Social & Political Science (UK), The Urban Systems Lab at The New School (US), Unidad de Innovación Social, UiS (Navarra), Universidad Intercultural de Chiapas (Mexico), University of the Western Cape (South Africa), Zürcher Hochschule der Künste (Switzerland), Autogestionadas and Observatorio de Economía Popular Social y Solidaria (OEPSS) (Argentina), and Observatorio Social sobre Empresas Recuperadas (OSERA) (Argentina).

Other prominent collaborators include Farm Hack, L'Atelier Paysan, Tzoumakers, Family First Solar, ICA Group, FEBE Coop, Ver.di (Germany), SMart, Alexander von Humboldt Institute for Internet Society, Commons Transition Coalition, Business Council of Cooperatives and Mutuals (Australia), The National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA), The U.S. Solidarity Economy Network, Civic Hall, Sustainable Economies Law Center, and the Cooperative University College of Kenya.

20. Financial Overview

The Platform Cooperativism Consortium (PCC) sustains its work through a combination of institutional support, research grants, philanthropic partnerships, and membership contributions from the Solidarity Collaboratory (SC)—a democratic, cross-sectoral alliance of cooperatives and co-op–adjacent organizations committed to building a more equitable digital economy. Our major funders have included Google.org (which awarded PCC a $1 million grant), The Open Society Foundations, The Ford Foundation, The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through GIZ, Robert Bosch Stiftung, National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA-NIFA), Mondragon University, The Hewlett Foundation, The Media Democracy Fund, Internet Society Foundation, The New School, and others. Their generous support has enabled us to sustain long-term initiatives and expand our global impact.

The SC plays a vital role in co-governing and financially supporting our work. Members benefit from shared infrastructure, research access, international visibility, and a collective voice in shaping the future of the digital cooperative economy. Organizations that have joined the Solidarity Collaboratory include Institute for Technology and Society of Rio de Janeiro, Cotabo, Fondazione Centro Studi Doc, GEST CoopGivit, Organization of Brazilian Coops (OCB), Cooperatives for a Better World, United Healthcare Workers (SEIU-UHW), CoLab Cooperative, La Coop des Communs, Fairbnb.coop, NeedsMap, Democracy at Work Institute, Diesis Network, Start.coop, Coop Exchange, Coopersystem, CoopTech Hub, Comunidad y Biodiversidad (COBI), Indonesia Cooperative University, Institute for the Study of Employee Ownership and Profit Sharing at Rutgers University, OCAD University, Red Root Artist Cooperative, Rekursive, Suara Cooperative, and The Dikkenneh Co-op.

Our expenditures primarily fund our research fellows, annual conference, a small team consisting of two full-time and several part-time staff, and related activities including publications, community engagement, and strategic communications. All contributions are managed transparently and align with our mission to build a more democratic, inclusive, and sustainable digital future. We continue to welcome new collaborators and funders who share this vision. To learn more or become a member, please visit our membership page or contact us at **pcc@newschool.edu**.

Keeping in Touch

Social Media

As part of our commitment to ethical communication and community well-being, the PCC is transitioning away from Twitter/X due to growing concerns over the platform's role in spreading misinformation, weakening content moderation, and enabling harmful discourse. This decision reflects our values and concerns about the platform's alignment with democratic discourse and ethical governance. While our Twitter accounts (**@platformcoop** and **@PCC_Global**) will remain accessible for archival purposes, we are shifting our focus to digital spaces that better reflect our values. Stay connected with us through our newsletter, reaching over 8,500 subscribers, for updates, resources, and opportunities to engage with the platform cooperative community. You can also follow us on:

- **Bluesky**
- **Facebook**
- **Instagram**
- **YouTube**
- **LinkedIn**
- **Newsletter**

Contact us at **pcc@newschool.edu**.

Platform Cooperativism Consortium

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